

The Official

NEO GEO



Newsletter

January '93

Issue no. 2

ART OF FIGHTING



Being asked to review this game was really like a busman's holiday. Since the days of the Texas TI/994A, right through to MSX, I have been involved in assessing and reviewing games for magazines and major software houses. "What the blazes has a TI/994A got to do with a Neo Geo? I hear you ask. Arguably, it could still hold a candle to the NES, were it alive. The game speed and graphic capability were ace, it really was the first bit of kit that fired my imagination. With at least seventy carts, on its launch, and some horrendously fast disk based games, some internal (it is reputed) bust up at Texas instruments caused its withdrawal from the market. Although the Texas had no arcade links, like SNK, it would have been the Neo Geo of its time. I must say that there were no martial art or fighting games available for it, or if there were, they kept them from me.

The first martial arts game that made an impression on me arrived in cartridge format for the MSX. As I eagerly opened the package, I thought "What the '??'" !! does Yie Ar Kung Fu mean?" Two minutes later I wasn't bothered, as I endeavoured to deal my opponent (A well endowed young lady, alas) lethal blows. That was my initiation into martial art games, and the quality has con-

stantly improved due to custom processors and less expensive memory. Art of Fighting, is in my opinion current state of the art. I say current, because programming techniques and technology are at this very moment probably improving over present releases.

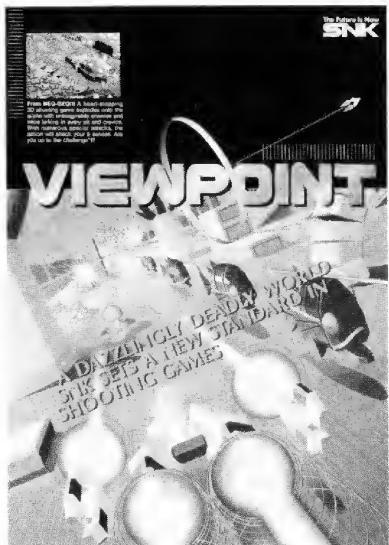
What's it all about? Well, they say there is no such thing as a new movie idea, and a long time ago we all came to the same decision about video games. Forget the story line, (yes, they've got her again!), what about the action? Now this is where Art of Fighting really delivers the goods. Bone-jarring, foot-kicking, knuckle-cracking, head-butting. I could go on and on. The first time I ever felt personal damage was when Jack caught me unawares in Mac's Bar. I did feel that it was a bit sneaky, since he had me off guard watching him blow bubble-gum. If

you've played Art of Fighting, you'll know what I mean. If you have got stereo hooked up, then Jack's sliding, crashing kick really devastates the senses. But this is a powerful game, and the runaway action is like a steam-roller going downhill with no brakes. Sometimes, you can feel quite relieved as your last credit goes, and you get a chance to wind down.

Essentially, you have two modes of play, story and VS. With an extra stick your friend can oppose you with a choice of the eight man characters. Incidentally, you are both able to choose the same character. Going with the story option, you can choose between Ryo and Robert, both with different fighting attributes. Each opponent has a different super attack, all of which are pretty devastating, and usually very fast. The large character sprites move smooth and fast, with brilliant animated action. When I say fast, I mean fast, Lee Pai Long, your third opponent, is sometimes a blur on screen, but a few well aimed head kicks can bring him to heel after a lot of practise. If you say Lee Pai Long quickly-Leap along, I wonder if there is some kind of an "in" joke among programmers!

Even if martial arts isn't your scene you should take a look at "ART OF FIGHTING", it could well change your mind. If martial arts are your scene, then this is the game you should be aiming to play sooner rather than later. On a scale of 1 to 10 it's ten, until they bring the next one out.....

By Dennis Hemmings
NK Supplies Ltd



VIEWPOINT

For those who like a good shoot-em-up, this could be the hottest release since the 'Last Resort'. A game that captures all the features of the most popular shoot-em-up's but also uses a unique way of presenting the action on screen.

Not since the early days of video arcades, with the game "Zaxxon", has a shoot-em-up used a 35 degree isometric view, employed in "Viewpoint" with great results. This original graphical representation gives all the objects seen on screen a solid feel.

You take control of a space craft in a low level attack on hordes of enemy craft, in a bizarre world. The game features attacks from giant wasps and killer fish, all attempting to stop progress through this graphically stunning landscape.

Not every thing in this world is deadly. Dotted around the playscape are a number of bonus features that allow the player to power-up, collect better weapons systems, and the special smart bombs. Each bonus feature can destroy all on screen during vital moments.

This game is a real delight for all players. The memory card feature may will be needed to enable you to make it to the end.

Unfortunately, SNK has decided not to release Viewpoint in Europe. The game has only been released in Japan and USA. However, given the high level of interest in Europe, we have negotiated with SNK to make the game available at end Feb. We anticipate a limited supply, so we advise you to contact your DGM dealer immediately to order Viewpoint.



FATAL FURY 2

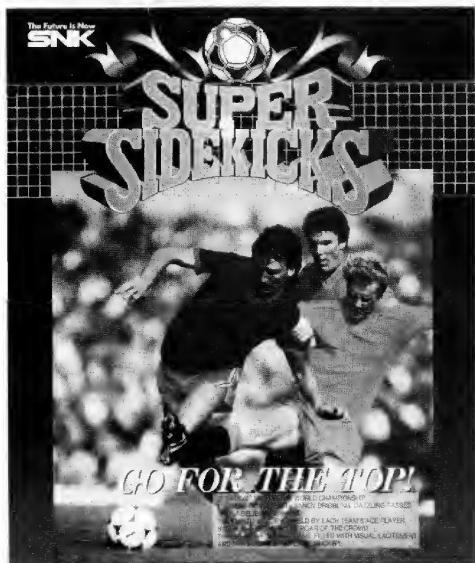
The three lone wolves that did battle in the original Fatal Fury return. With action and excitement, Andy, Joe, and Terry take on the world again. This time they have some new companions to help push home the attack.

The player can choose from 8 gaudy gladiators evenly matched in power and cunning. With improved animation and thrilling action sequences, the player can now get right into the middle of the action, using the new 3-dimensional playing arena.

New features in this game include secret hidden moves, that the player will have to learn, as well as ability

to now master your surroundings in order to use cunning, and strength to beat all attackers.

All the player's possible choices as hero, have individual personalities. Some are, tough, some touchy, and some temperamental. But they are all exciting. Once the player has mastered the secret skills of each of the eight selectable characters, he can battle to the death anything that the "Sultan of Slugs" Battle Royale broadcast live from the PAO PAO Cafe.



SUPER SIDEKICKS

This fast action simulator is the second soccer game for the Neo Geo. This time rather than a futuristic representation of the sport, the game attempts to be as realistic as possible. It involves players in a battle to be the winning line-up of twelve international teams.

The game utilises a unique directional feature offering better control of the different team members, compared to other sports games. A rotating arrow is controlled by the joystick and points the direction in which the player's selected team member is to travel. It also controls the direction of the

ball when passing to other players.

The players are fully controllable with the feature of ball control, dribbling, and special football tricks to beat off the competition. If the opposition become too hard, then there is the ability to foul or be fouled.

The action increases the further up the league table the player advances. The skill level needed to win each game increasing from match to match. The player will have to work hard to be able to become the world champion.

Neo Geo Glossary

Various terms have evolved around the Neo Geo console which are quite confusing. Technically speaking there is no such thing as a Scart machine. All Neo Geo consoles can be connected by a Scart lead. We have outlined below, in glossary form, the main terms evolved in the buying and selling of Neo Geo hard and software.

Neo Geo Hardware

Hardware is the term used to refer to the console, controller, memory card, power supply unit (PSU) and connection leads. There is one standard design for the Neo Geo world-wide. However, the consoles made for the Japanese market does have a Japanese language chip, so all screen messages appear in Japanese. (Good reason to stick to officially imported products).

Neo Geo Software

Software are the games for the Neo Geo console. At present Neo Geo games are only available on cartridge. Please note, although the cartridges for both the Neo Geo arcade machine and the home console may appear similar, they are not interchangeable. The software will work on both NTSC or PAL console. However, with some of the earlier games which were coded specially for NTSC consoles, some minor flickering and overlapping may occur in certain parts of the game.

Official Neo Geo

This is hardware and software imported and distributed by DGM LTD, SNK's officially appointed distributor of Neo Geo in the UK. All DGM supplied Neo Geo products carry a manufacturer's warranty, are made to UK specifications and come with English language packaging and instructions.

Grey/Parallel Imports

These are the importation of Neo Geo products by a non-SNK appointed importers. These are mainly retailers. These imports come from sub-distributors in Japan (but not direct from SNK), USA and Hong Kong. The products are not suitable for the UK market and may not be of UK specifications. They carry no manufacturer's warranty and you may find difficulty having them repaired or replaced if found faulty after purchase.

PAL-B Console

This is the console with UK specifications. It connects to the UK TVs by RF (Radio Frequency) lead.

NTSC Consoles

- a. NTSC is the TV format for USA and Japan. NTSC TV runs at 60hz (PAL machine runs at 50hz).
- b. Game enthusiasts prefer the NTSC machines' faster speed and if connected through a Scart lead, give the best possible picture. DGM LTD supply the NTSC console with a Scart lead. Please note, to be able to use a NTSC console you must have either a TV or monitor with a SCART socket.
- c. Beware if you are considering buying a NTSC console. Make sure you get one supplied through a DGM retailer. DGM's NTSC consoles run on a standard 9V 1.2 amp power supply. Some unofficially imported NTSC consoles from USA and Japan, run on 5V 3amp Regulated Switch Mode Power Supply. To use them a step down transformer is necessary. This set up is not particularly safe for extended use. Further, the 5V PSU is not particularly reliable and you will find, to your regret, its expensive and hard to replace.

Connection Leads

- a. **RF Connection:** This connection comes in two parts. First a standard RF cable. This is the same as you would use to connect a VCR to a TV. Second is the RF modulator box which connects to the back of the Neo Geo. Please note this connection method only works with PAL-B console to PAL TV (i.e. UK standard TV)
- b. **AV (audio/video) connection:** This lead can connect direct from any Neo Geo to any TV/monitor with AV phono sockets.
- c. **Scart:** Like AV leads, a Scart lead can connect any Neo Geo to a TV/monitor with a scart socket.
Any of the above leads can be ordered from DGM through any of the dealers listed in our dealer directory.

Neo Geo Software

All software is measured in Megabytes on the Neo Geo, not Megabits. There are 8 Megabits to each Megabyte. Manufacturers of console of less potent techno specs to the Neo Geo tend to express their software size in Megabits. We can only guess this is a marketing ploy to give the end-user an enhanced perceived value of what they are actually getting.

We apologise that we are unable to answer your letters individually. However, the glossary answers many of the questions that have been sent in by members. If your query is not one that has been covered by this issue, please be patient. More techno-info will be covered in future issues.

Dealer's Corner

Each issue we will be introducing a DGM Neo Geo Dealer (retailer/mail order outlet).

Our first dealer is NK Supplies LTD who specialise in mail order. NK Supplies is run by Dennis Hemmings. As you realise from Dennis' front cover piece, he is a video game enthusiast who has been involved with games for many years. You can say a real video game veteran.

Dennis has worked in the games industry as a PR consultant for many years. Apart from contributions to various computer and games magazines he was responsible for setting and running the Konami software club and newsletter. Until it was taken in house by Bandai, he was also involved in the Nintendo members club, helpline and magazine.

Contrary to what you may think happens at DGM, we do not have time to play the Neo Geo games. We engage freelancers to evaluate our new games. Dennis has, on occasions, done evaluations for us and in the process has become hooked on the Neo Geo. So keen was he, that he bought the game he was not engaged to evaluate, to savour. However, the cost of the Neo Geo games does limit the extent to which such an appetite can be satisfied.

In order to extend the range of games he could play he organised swaps with fellow Neo Geo enthusiasts. However, the number of Neo Geo owners he knew was limited, so he hit on the idea of setting up a mail order swap operation. But why limit it to swap he thought. NK Supplies was launched concentrating on New, Used and Swap of Neo Geo hard and software. There are many other owners who are unable to buy each release new and welcome the opportunity to trade or swap one of their less cherished games in order to enjoy continual variety.

The service has expanded rapidly and is being extended to include Sega, Nintendo and NEC PC Engine.

Dennis can be contacted on:

Tel: 0803 551888
Fax: 0803 664599

Letter

Dear Editor,

Congratulations on the launch of the Official Neo Geo Club - and especially on the list of Neo Geo stockists in your first newsletter, which has already proved invaluable. I hope that we shall see many game reviews and perhaps too a useful list of all game titles available for the Neo Geo together with brief game description.

I have hunted everywhere for such a games directory which would make life a lot easier, especially when buying or renting games by mail order, where most of us don't really know what we are getting until the game arrives. Even when buying from a shop, most retailers don't have a Neo Geo set up to enable customers to see what they are getting before they part with £100-plus.

Yesterday I visited one of the stockists in your directory, to look for a shoot-'em-up because we all rave about ASO II. The shop manager recommended Andros Dunos, saying that it was even harder than **ASO II**. Trustingly, I parted with loadsa money and headed home. You can imagine my disappointment when my 11 year-old son finished the game in about 20 minutes, whereas it had taken us over 20 days to master **ASO II**. So, if we can't see a game before we buy it, we need objective reviews from your newsletter - including criticism where warranted.....

Finally, am I alone in having had my fill of **Ninja Combat** games? It seems to me that when you've played one, you've played the lot but with 80 per cent of all new games falling into this category, choice is limited for us beat-'em-up cynics... At least the grapevine tells me that Viewpoint will be brilliant, so I am looking forward to your review (warts'n all, please).

'Simon Chaplin'
'Buckinghamshire'

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You would be pleased to know that we are preparing a game guide which is nearly completed. Volume 1 will have review, description and screen shots of 20 games. Full details will be in newsletter 3. Hopefully, this will help members with their game selection.

Sadly, combat games are in most demand. However, this is a point that is gradually being addressed with games like Viewpoint and sports simulations.

A game rating chart is also being prepared. This should be of great help when comparing various games. It is hoped the chart will feature such things as game size (megabyte), playability, game rating (excellent, good, mediocre, poor, dog).

Club Helpline

As much as we would like to, at present the Club does not have a telephone helpline. We regret that all your enquiries must be sent by post. Every effort will be made to deal with all enquiries in the newsletter. Please note the DGM LTD Line (081 965 8199) can only deal with trade sales calls and club admin.

POSTERS

We have a limited number of SUPER SIDEKICKS posters to give away with this issue. All you have to do this time is send in a .36p stamp with a note of your membership number, and name and address printed clearly. Availability will be on a first come basis. Any extra stamps we receive will have first option on our next poster offer. Please note only one poster allowed per membership.

NEW RELEASES

SUPER SIDEKICKS end-Feb. '93

The following titles are in the pipe-line but no release date has been fixed yet.

FATAL FURY 2 sequel to original Fatal Fury

SENGOKU 2 sequel to original Sengoku

PRO-WRESTLING wrestling simulation.

NEO GEO CD

Despite our plan to feature details of the CD in this issue, we have not received any information from SNK. However, development work is still under way on the CD for the NEO GEO.

As the CD will be previewed in Japan in April '93, we anticipate and hope to have a summary of its specifications soon.

The CD is scheduled to go on sale in the UK around Sept. '93. No price has yet been fixed.

DEALER DIRECTORY

In order to provide more information in the newsletter, we have moved the directory to a separate sheet. The directory will be updated at the end of each month. If you want an update, please send in a stamp addressed envelop (state membership no.)

NEO GEO BAG

We have commissioned a British made, strong and stylish padded bag for carrying the NEOGEO. It will hold the console, 2 controllers, connector cables, power supply and 3 game cartridges. It will be available mid-March 1993 RRP £39.99. We hope to have a special offer on bag and picture it in the next issue of the newsletter.

SORRY!

We are sorry that issue no. 2 of the newsletter has been delayed. There have been a few teething problems. However, all over systems are up and running and we hope to improve each new issue of the newsletter. We are most grateful for your patience and understanding.

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